

# HARMONY FIRE DISTRICT

P.O. Box 360 – 194 Putnam Pike  
Harmony, R.I. 02829

The regularly scheduled monthly meeting of the Harmony Fire District Executive Board was held at the Harmony Fire Station on **Thursday, March 19, 2009.**

Present: Chief Stuart Pearson; Moderator - Raymond Fogarty, Jr.;  
Treasurer - Sandra Owens; Tax Collector - Kimberly Barber;  
Clerk - Ann Dahlquist; Attorney - Fred Mason, Jr.;  
Board Members - Louise Michaels, James Richards,  
Milton Huston & George Kain

Absent:

**I. – Meeting Called to Order:** 7:21 pm by Moderator Fogarty.

**II. - Approval of the minutes from the February 19<sup>th</sup> meeting.**

Moderator Fogarty asked the board if there were any discrepancies to note on the minutes from the February 19<sup>th</sup> meeting. If not, he would like to call for a motion to accept them.

Louise made a motion to accept the minutes. Jim seconded the motion. The motion carried.

**III. - Treasurer's Report:**

Sandy explained to the board that Kim and herself are still having problems adjusting the treasurer's reports. Kim believes that she has found where the glitch is, but if not she will contact the district's accountant, Geoff Malo to look into the problem for us.

Sandy presented her report for the month of December. Beginning balance December 1<sup>st</sup> \$441,575.69 and the ending balance December 31<sup>st</sup> \$361,957.53. December is the month for the largest payouts, call pay and insurance. Other than that there were no expenses out of the ordinary to report. 55% of the budget has been spent as of the end of December.

The Chief made Sandy aware that there was a problem with the water at the station today, with a large bill to be anticipated. George asked if the contractor will be able to tell us what is in the water causing the corrosion. If it is from salt the state may be liable. Some discussion followed about where to find the funds within the budget to pay this expense. Once the actual bill is received a motion will be made regarding how to appropriate the funds between accounts.

Jim made a motion to accept the treasurer's report. Milton seconded it. The motion carried.

**IV. - Tax Collector's Report:**

Taxes receivable balance is \$114,657.10 as of today's date. Taxes collected in the month of February were \$1,552.20. A couple of tax bills were generated that had been overlooked in billing last year, thus the adjustment in the receivables amount. Ray asked Kim how she

establishes which properties are within our district, how did she find these missed properties? Kim said that for these properties in particular the taxpayers had called. But she further explained that the properties are coded by the town tax assessor's office and transferred directly to us for billing. Sandy asked about reviewing plat maps. Kim stated that she does have a project in progress with Ray Goff, Gloucester Town Planner, and his assistant Heidi, updating the fire district plat and lot maps. Ray suggested that we have an outside individual, independently look at our maps and verify the lines. He will contact someone. George agrees that this issue will become even more important in the future when some of the larger lots that lie close to the line are subdivided.

Third party billing monies collected in the month of February totaled \$1,858.44.

Also, at last month's meeting the board was presented with the 2007-2008 Auditor's Report and they were given time to review it. Milton made a motion to accept the Auditor's Report for fiscal year 2007-2008. George seconded it. It was then opened for discussion. Ray asked if anyone had seen anything while reviewing the report that needed to be addressed. Sandy stated that Geoff Malo had commented that since our transition to QuickBooks and the use of a real ledger system for our accounting, his auditing procedure had gone much more smoothly. The Chief added that in a discussion he had with Geoff, Geoff stated that we had come ahead leaps and bounds from where we were. Our reporting is clean and transparent and easy to follow. The motion carried.

Louise made a motion to accept the tax collector's report. Milton seconded it. The motion carried.

#### **V. - Chief's Report:**

At our last meeting Ray had asked about stimulus money for fire districts. A letter was sent to Kevin Flynn in the Department of the Administration explaining that although cities and towns were sent letters asking for project proposals, fire districts were overlooked, even though we do qualify. So even though we had missed the initial deadline, we are being allowed to submit a project proposal. We have brought contractors in to obtain quotes for fixing and updating for energy efficiency, our heating, A/C & water conditioning systems. The entire package totals over \$100,000.

Jim asked about the age of the stations roof. The Chief stated that the rubber roof over the office area was done approximately 7 years ago. The roof over the bay area was done just last summer.

Article written by John Visich was published in IAFC-VCOS about our Strategic Plan. Copy enclosed in everyone's folder. We have already started to receive phone calls and e-mails with questions about the strategic plan process.

Last month there was a Gloucester Fire Chiefs meeting. We are all excited for spring to finally come, to start working together on the training site.

The framed and matted pictures have been picked up from Michael's in Smithfield. Due to their generous donation of custom framing and matting, we only purchased the supplies, the District saved just over \$1,000. Kristy, the custom picture framer, put many hours into the project and

was very pleasant to work with. Ray asked that a letter be to Michael's thanking them for their service.

On March 11<sup>th</sup> Capt. Brackett and Lt. DeConte attended a Pediatric Seminar. They each received continuing education credits for attending

A grant for \$1,000 was received from the Kilmartin Foundation. A thank you card was sent.

Wildland Gear was ordered from Firematic. It will be paid for with the 50/50 matching grant we received from RI DEM. The cost to district will be approximately \$2,000.

#### Upcoming events:

We are hosting a Fire Pro training session here Mon. & Tues. 9:00 am-5:00 pm. 3 people will be attending from our dept. Chief, Kim & Capt. Brackett. There will also be people attending from Cumberland, RI - Middlefield, CT - Dartmouth, MA – Georgetown, MA – Chepachet, RI.

Glocester Fire Department Annual Banquet – May 2, 2009 at Thompson Speedway, CT

Additionally, George wanted to mention that there is possibly grant money available to us through the Town of Glocester's Block Grants. He had seen an ad in the paper. Some discussion followed. A call will be made to the Town Clerk's office to get further details.

Jim made a motion to accept the chief's report. Milton seconded it. The motion carried.

#### VI. - Committee Reports:

- a. Rescue Committee – Jim, Chair – not much new to report, 'Status Quo'. The next step is that we will be receiving demos within the next few weeks. Ray asked the Chief the status of the prospective grant from the Greggson Foundation. The Chief stated that he had heard funds from this foundation are usually not awarded until September or October. So he plans on sending out a letter to them in August.
- b. Tax Exemption Committee – George, Chair – Ray thanked Viviane Valentine, on behalf of the district board. Beyond what the recommended motion states, Viviane also suggested that the district should be notified whenever the town is planning to make any changes to tax assessments. That way the district would be able to evaluate what the fiscal impact of the proposed changes would be. George then made the motion regarding district tax exemptions:

*The Harmony Fire District's "Tax Exemption Policy" is as follows:*

- *Taxpayers need to apply for exemptions at the Glocester Tax Assessor's office.*
- *All record keeping and updating will be done at the Glocester Tax Assessor's office.*
- *We will only apply tax exemptions to taxpayer accounts that have been assessed by the Glocester Tax Assessor's office.*
- *Tax exemptions will be calculated at the Harmony Fire District's current rate at the time of billing.*

Milton seconded the motion. The motion carried.

**VII. - Old Business:**

'Call Pay' analysis being prepared by George. He has prepared a rough draft but the analysis must be fine tuned and have dollar amounts inserted. Ray asked that he just have a total estimate ready before the April meeting, for budget purposes. George does not believe that it will be much more than the current budget amount, if any.

Ray also asked about legislation regarding the car tax, if the Chief had heard about any changes. The governor's new budget should be released next week and it will need to be verified if we will still receive it.

George stated that he is still looking into the tax assessments on "Coomer's Dam." Kim helped him do some research, but no new information has been obtained yet. He will continue to research the subject.

**III. - New Business:** Addressed throughout reports.

**IX. - Public Input:** No audience.

**X. – Executive Session:**

The Board then announced it would be going into executive session on a matter of personnel of which the individual has been notified in writing pursuant to *RIGL 42-46-5(a)(1)*.

A motion was made by Milton to go into executive session. Jim seconded it.

Executive session began at 8:45 pm and ended at 9:10 pm.

No vote was taken while in executive session.

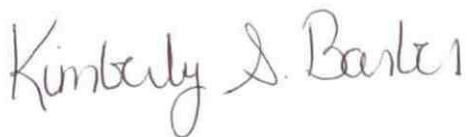
**XI. – Adjournment:**

Milton made a motion to adjourn the meeting. George seconded it. The motion carried.

The March meeting of the Harmony Fire District Executive Board was adjourned at 9:12 pm.

The next meeting of the Harmony Fire District Executive Board  
is scheduled for Thursday, 7:00 pm, April 16, 2009 at the Harmony Fire Department.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kimberly S. Barber".

Kimberly S. Barber  
Tax Collector/Secretary